



U.S. Department of Transportation

SITUATION REPORT, ESF #1 - TRANSPORTATION

OPERATIONAL STATUS

Agency: DOT

***Op Status** Yellow - Disruption or other than normal operations

***Report #:** DOT-HQ-07

***Related Event:** Seattle Earthquake -- 2/28/01

Status as of: 03/01/2001 at 17:16

Region/Office: Headquarters

Distribution Level: Open - For Public Release

Situation Summary: On 28 February 2001, a 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck Seattle at 1:55 p.m. EST. The epicenter was located 30 miles SW of Seattle, WA, between Olympia and Bremerton. The earthquake depth of 33 miles is similar to the depth of the 1949 earthquake. Two aftershocks have occurred near the epicenter, they registered 3.4 and 2.7 on the Richter Scale. No further damage was reported. Initial reports do not indicate major damage. Although there are scattered outages, power has largely been restored. The FEMA Director and Congressional Delegates are in Seattle today. General Services Administration is sending engineers to Seattle to inspect Federal buildings. The Governor of Washington declared a State of Emergency for western Washington. Efforts are underway for the Governor to request a Federal Declaration.

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT

Air: Seattle airport (SEA/TAC) is open. Only 24-28 flights per hour are being handled (this is about 1/2 of normal) because of the temporary tower. National Airspace System facilities in the Seattle area sustained minimal damage. In addition to the SEA/TAC airport, Boeing Field is also operational; however, the air traffic control towers (ATCT) at both airports are out of service due to structural damage. SEA/TAC hopes to resume tower operations in 48 hours, and Boeing Field is erecting a temporary tower by the end of the day (3/1/01). However, the 10,000 foot runway at Boeing Field sustained extensive damage to the middle third, which allows only 5,000 feet of runway on the south end to be used. Aircraft landing will be limited to 12,500 pounds or less.

The Northwest Mountain regional emergency management staff have relocated to the emergency operations facility at the Seattle air route traffic control center until Monday, when their building should again be usable. No computers were destroyed, but furnishings were damaged. The Operations staff is utilizing the building during this period.

Bellingham airport is open and operational.
Portland airport is open, and operational.

Three FAA and 1 SEA/TAC personnel were injured.

Rail: Burlington Northern found problems on their line between Vancouver and Seattle, Specifically at Nisqually and Wabash. Service should resume on 3/1/01 by 6:00 p.m.
Union Pacific inspected its track in the northwest and found no damage to their assets.
FRA's regional office reports that communications were disrupted due to overloaded circuits.

Amtrak Six passenger trains in the northwest area are canceled at this time. Trains #11 and 14 will turn at Eugene, OR. Amtrak expects to resume service sometime on 3/1/01.

Highways: Information about roadway conditions including closures, debris, status of bridges and state routes continues to come in as roads are inspected. For the most part, the roads are open but with heavy traffic. Landslides and debris have occurred affecting roads. All Interstates are open; some of the state routes are affected. Interstate 90's floating bridge is listing.

Oregon DOT reports that the Portland and Northwest Oregon areas have no bridge damage, including the Astoria Megler bridge and bridges in the Portland metro area.

FHWA's division office building in Washington was damaged and are closed today, but occupancy should resume tomorrow, Friday, March 2. All employees are accounted for and are OK.

FHWA continues to work with the Washington DOT to assess damage. More detailed information should be available in about 24 hours.

Marine: The ports of Seattle, Tacoma, and Olympia are open with no restrictions. The 1st Avenue South, Spokane Street, 14th/16th Avenue bridges are closed to marine traffic until further notice. These closures will restrict some tug and barge operations in Seattle. The COTP does not anticipate major impact as a result.

Transit: Seattle's monorail and bus operations (King County or METRO) are operational. The tunnel and viaduct and monorail guide-way are all structurally sound. Currently there are no light-rail-vehicle operations in Seattle. There is a heavy-rail transit operation involving one vehicle departing in the morning and another at night (also not affected by the earthquake).

One ferry service provider, Coleman Dock, experienced a problem at the dock which required rerouting all truck traffic on a 5-hour detour. Cars and passengers could use the ferry service. As of 4:00 p.m. on 3/1/01, all ferries, including the Coleman Dock, should be running.

Area transit agencies headquartered near Seattle reported minimal, if any, damage. Transit agencies have been dispatching teams to inspect for structural damages to their vehicles and facilities.

Pipelines: Olympic Pipeline and Williams Natural Gas companies are checking strain gauges in areas identified with soil movement. All reports indicate stable soil conditions in those areas. Olympic is continuing its assessment and patrolling of the Seattle delivery pipeline to Harbor Island. Reports indicate that only one weld in the station piping has been compromised. All other pipeline sections are holding pressure.

The Office of Pipeline Safety (RSPA/OPS) Western Regional Office in Denver, CO is contacting pipeline operators in the area affected by the earthquake. Both companies have dispatched employees to patrol their pipeline for leak indications and Olympic is checking their storage tanks for damage. Phone line disruptions to the area are hampering communications, but early reports indicate no serious pipeline problems.

NOTE: Telephone communications between DC and the disaster site was a problem, but by the use of the GETS (Government Emergency Telecommunication Service) card which provides priority use of the telephone lines for crisis response, the calls went through.

**Motor Carrier
Safety:**
**Highway Traffic
Safety:**

ACTIONS TAKEN

**What actions have been
taken?**

The Office of Emergency Transportation is continuing to monitor and report on this event, along with the DOT Emergency Coordinators and the RETREP.

OET is attending the FEMA Emergency Operations Center meetings and providing updates.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION INCIDENTS

**International transportation
incidents:**

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Attachments: None

Source(s): RETREP Region 10, Region 9, FAA, USCG, FTA, FHWA, RSPA/OPS, FRA, Transport Canada and the new media